Lovely Strange Dark
YORU NO DOUWA
"EVENING FAIRY-TALES"
BY KONNO KITA
CHAPTER 8
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Editing Cpt Mischief
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lovelystrangedark.wordpress.com

EVENING FAIRY☆TALES

PART ONE
SNOWY CAT
Just standing by my building at this hour...
Who's he?
Haa
EVENING.
I WAS JUST THINKING HOW COLD IT IS...

IT'S SUPPOSED TO REALLY COME DOWN TONIGHT.
GO HOME.
...EVENING.
UM,
SEEYA.
It'd be smart to avoid him.
WHERE'D THIS KID COME FROM?
Go home, he says?
...HUH,
THAT SO?
ARE YOU YUKIE TOSHIKO?

I'M HERE TO COLLECT YOUR RENTAL.
...I AM.
—CAN I HELP YOU?
I RENTED SOMETHING FROM YOU?
YES.
BUT I'VE NEVER MET YOU BEFORE.
...YEAH, UM...
TO BE MORE ACCURATE, THE AGREEMENT I MADE WAS WITH YUKIE SACHIKO.

SORRY IT'S JUST INSTANT.
THANKS.
YUKIE SACHIKO IS MY MOTHER—
MY MOM PASSED AWAY YEARS AND YEARS AGO.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE RENTED, BUT WHY WOULD YOU COME HERE AFTER ALL THIS TIME?
OH, AND YOU HAVEN'T TOLD ME YOUR NAME EITHER.
I'M THE CAT LENDER

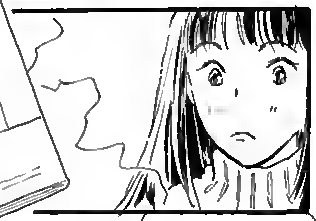
WAIT,
SO DOES THAT MEAN MOM RENTED A...
THINK OF IT AS A STAGE NAME.
THAT'S NOT A NAME.
A CAT, YES.
OH, HERE IT IS!
I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET HIM INTO MY APARTMENT.
This guy
HE'S TROUBLE.
UM, LOOK, I'M TIRED OUT FROM WORKING OVERTIME.
I'M SORRY, BUT FOR TODAY, COULD WE JUST...
AND I'VE GOT WORK TO DO, TOO.
RUSTLE

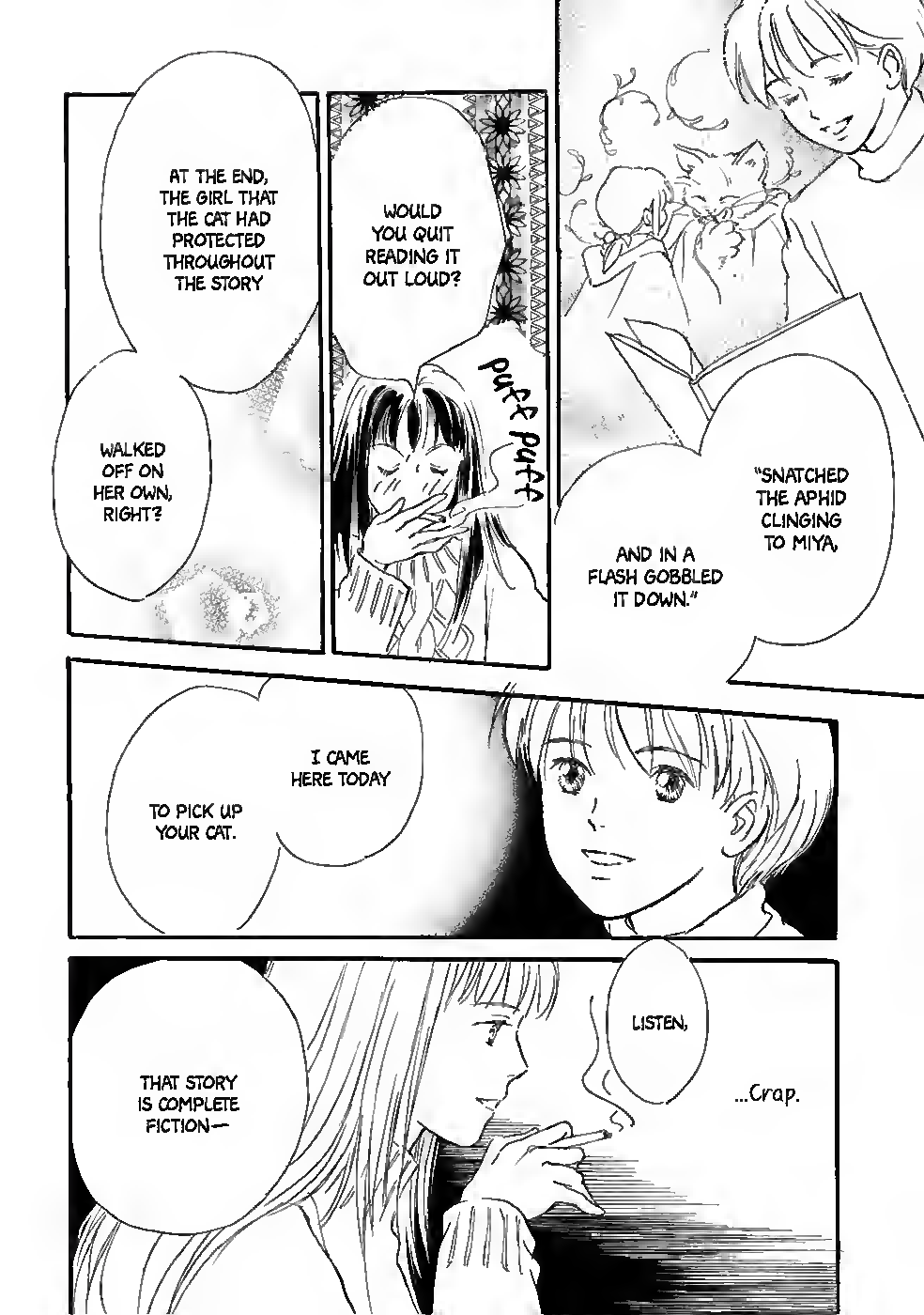
"You know, the reason you're always complaining about being lonely and sad..."

the snowy cat suddenly extended his hand."

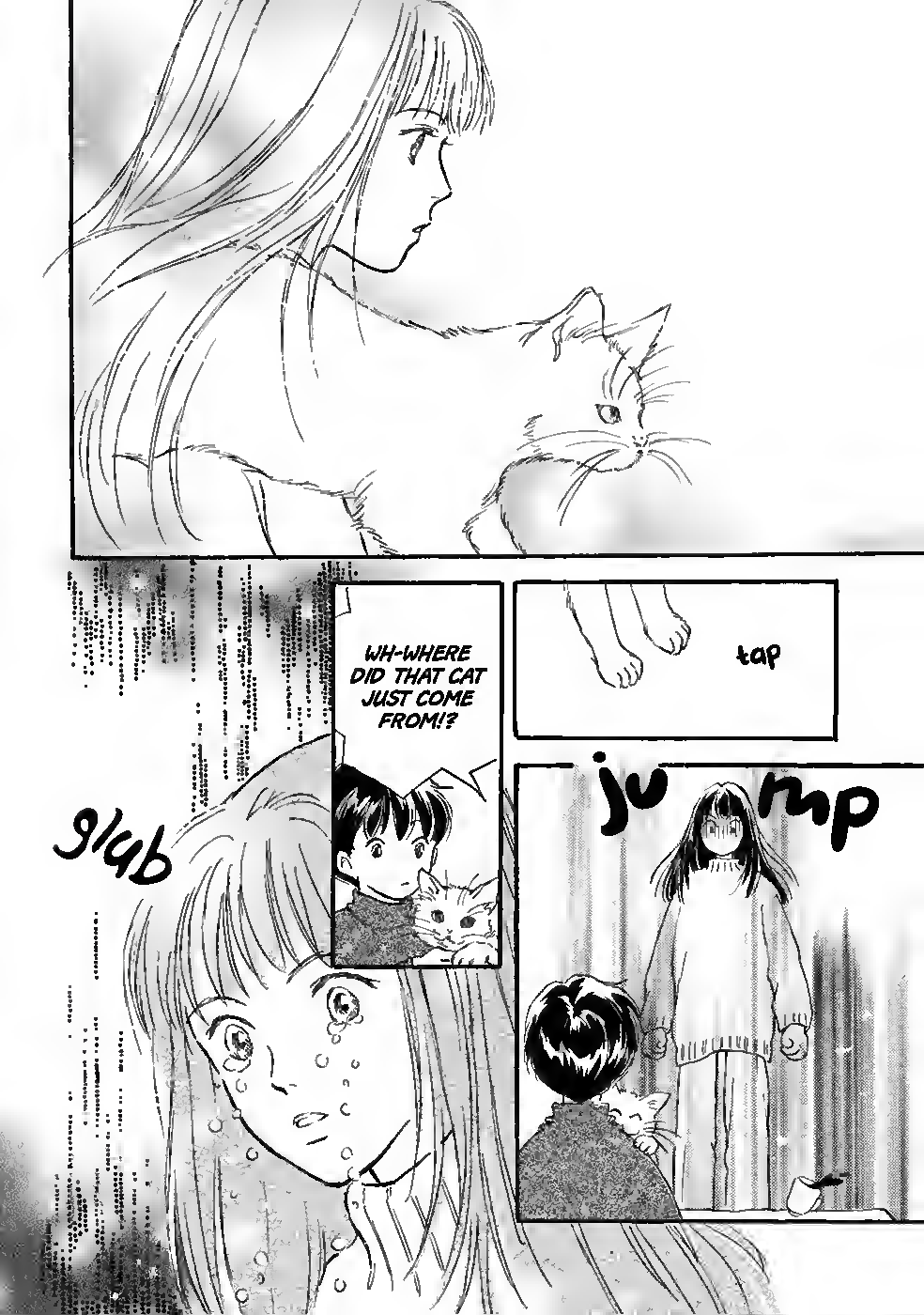
"Before he finished the sentence,

"That right there is a wooly aphid."




"SNATCHED THE APHID CLINGING TO MIYA,
AND IN A FLASH GOBBLED IT DOWN."
puff puff
WOULD YOU QUIT READING IT OUT LOUD?
AT THE END, THE GIRL THAT THE CAT HAD PROTECTED THROUGHOUT THE STORY
WALKED OFF ON HER OWN, RIGHT?
I CAME HERE TODAY
TO PICK UP YOUR CAT.
LISTEN,
...Crap.
THAT STORY IS COMPLETE FICTION—

I MEAN, JUST LOOK AROUND.
THERE'S NO CAT FOOD, CAT BOX, CAT ANYTHING HERE.
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD HAVE A CAT—
COME ON,
YOU CAN COME OUT NOW.
Maybe I can pick him up and toss him out
side


WH-WHERE DID THAT CAT JUST COME FROM!?
tap
jump
glub

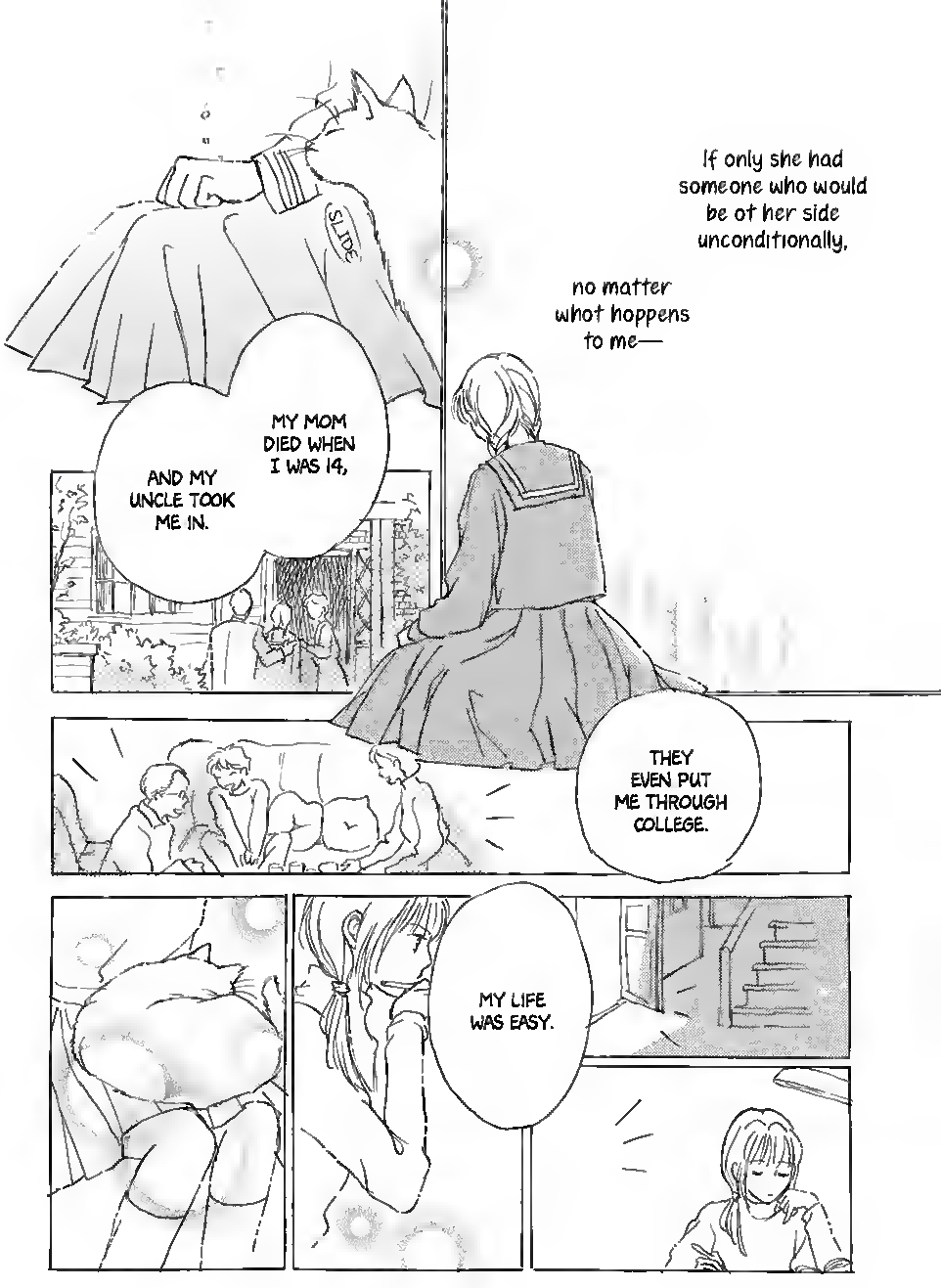
IS THIS A MAGIC TRICK?
Whoa, the water works keep coming
WHAT'S GOING ON?

IT CAN BE A LITTLE UNSETTLING IN THE BEGINNING,
BUT YOU'LL GET USED TO IT SOON ENOUGH.

YUKIE SACHIKO VISITED MY SHOP.

If only I could keep her from feeling that loneliness—

I don't have long left.
My one regret
is that my daughter will be alone after I'm gone.


If only she had someone who would be at her side unconditionally,
no matter what happens to me—
SLIDE
MY MOM DIED WHEN I WAS 14,
AND MY UNCLE TOOK ME IN.
THEY EVEN PUT ME THROUGH COLLEGE.
MY LIFE WAS EASY.

BUT IT NEVER LEFT YOUR SIDE.
IT WAS ALWAYS CLOSE TO YOU.
YOU COULD NEVER SEE IT,
THIS CAT WAS ALWAYS WITH YOU.
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOU NO LONGER NEED SOMEONE AT YOUR SIDE.
AND THIS CAT IS GETTING ON IN YEARS.
...HEY, WHAT ABOUT THE RENTAL FEE?
IT MUST BE HUGE AT THIS POINT.
Practical.

MOM WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO AFFORD IT.
RUB
THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE. SOMETHING THAT RARE MUST BE EXPENSIVE.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. THE PAYMENT'S BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.
...FAIR POINT
IF SHE HAD ANY YEARS TO GIVE, SHE WOULDN'T HAVE RENTED A CAT FOR YOU IN THE FIRST PLACE.
YEAH, SHE DIDN'T PAY WITH MONEY.
HUH?
DON'T TELL ME SHE PAID WITH HER LIFE OR SOMETHING!?
SHE PAID WITH SOMETHING THAT, LIKE MONEY, SOME PEOPLE HAVE IN ABUNDANCE AND SOME PEOPLE DON'T.
HOWEVER, NO MATTER HOW MUCH OF IT YOU USE, IT NEVER RUNS OUT.

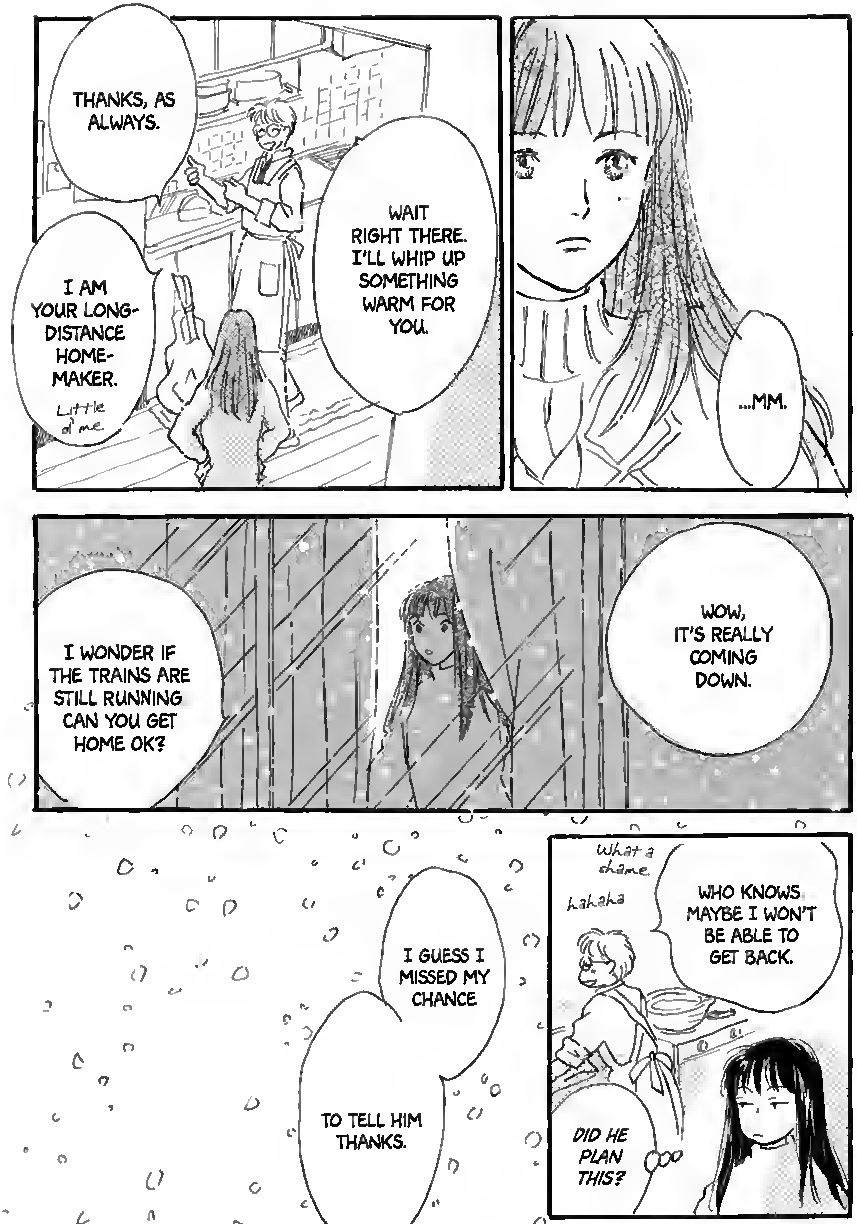
WELL,
IT'S A LITTLE HARD TO PUT INTO WORDS.
THAT'S A NICE RIDDLE.
WHAT IS IT?
I GUESS THE CLOSEST WORD
WOULD BE "LOVE".

IT'S NOT A TRICK,
BUT IT IS A FAIRY-TALE.
YOU CAN'T TRICK ME LIKE A CHILD.
THIS ISN'T SOME FAIRY-TALE.
Love

SORRY FOR BARGING IN AT NIGHT.
GOOD LUCK WITH WORK.
CAW
ALL THIS TIME, HASN'T IT?
I MEAN, THIS CAT'S BEEN WITH YOU
...W-
WAIT!
OH!
GOOD TIMING!

ERK!?
push
I'LL MAKE US SOMETHING GOOD TONIGHT~
I'M HERE TO CHEER YOU ON! BROUGHT YOU SOME FOOD.
slap
YOU IDIOT.
DID YOU HAVE A GUY IN HERE? —UH!
WHAT?
HEY, DID YOU SEE A BOY PASS BY?
I heard
I SAID BOY! A CHILD.
LIKE MIDDLE SCHOOL AGE

Middle school age?
Mom died twelve years ago.
TOSHI?
.....
HUH?
I GUESS..
YOU'VE GOT BRUISES UNDER YOUR EYES.
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN SLEEPING MUCH, HAVE YOU?
...THAT'S WHY I KEEP SAYING WE SHOULD MOVE IN TOGETHER.
IF I QUIT MY DAY JOB, I WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP FOOD ON THE TABLE.
CLICK
HOW ABOUT YOU JUST STICK TO ONE JOB?

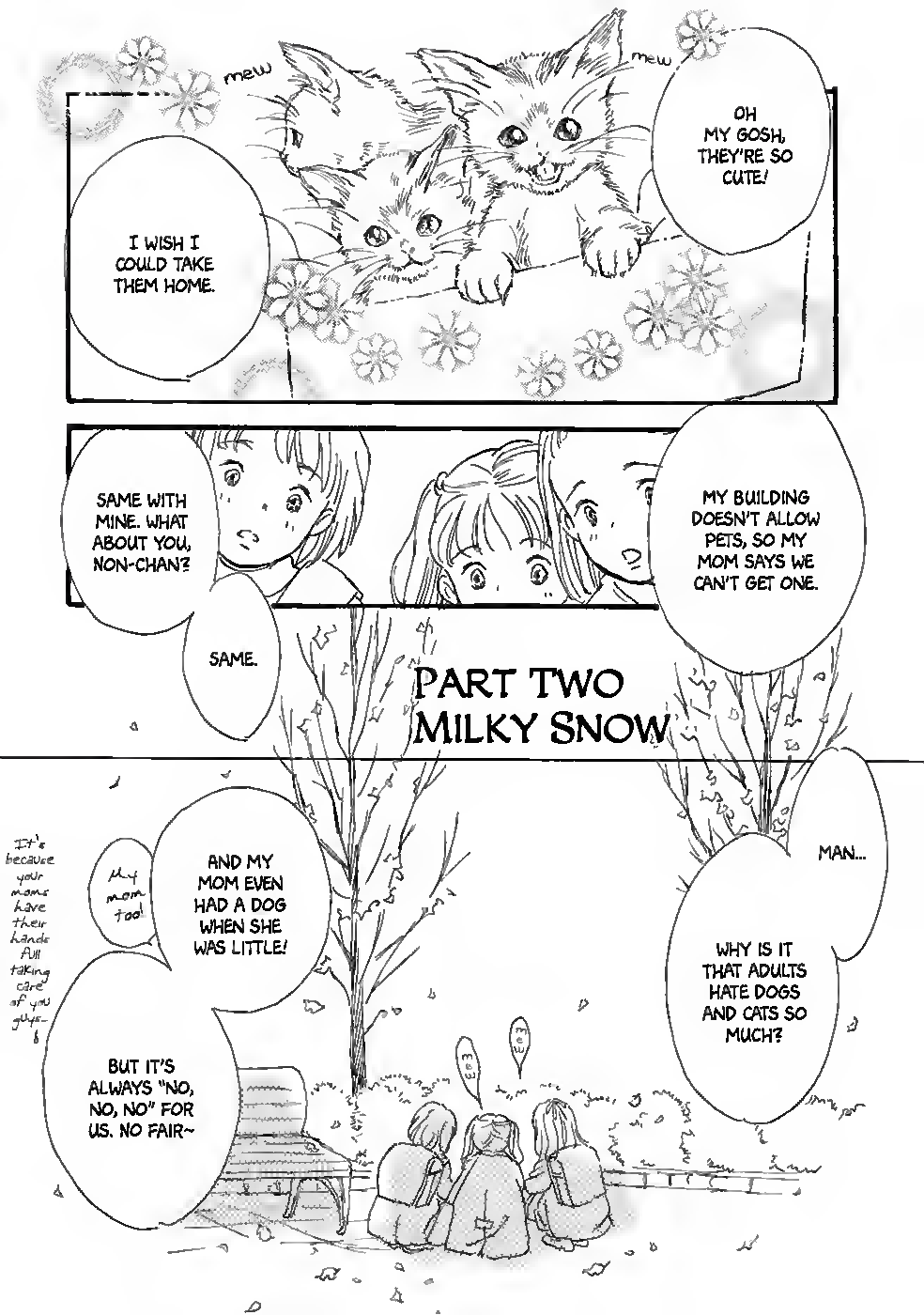

THANKS, AS ALWAYS.
I AM YOUR LONG-DISTANCE HOME-MAKER.
Little d'me.
WAIT RIGHT THERE. I'LL WHIP UP SOMETHING WARM FOR YOU.
...MM.
I WONDER IF THE TRAINS ARE STILL RUNNING CAN YOU GET HOME OK?
WOW, IT'S REALLY COMING DOWN.
What a shame.
kahaha
WHO KNOWS MAYBE I WON'T BE ABLE TO GET BACK.
DID HE PLAN THIS?
I GUESS I MISSED MY CHANCE
TO TELL HIM THANKS.

Snowy Cat
"THANKS FOR EVERY-THING YOU'VE DONE FOR ME."
"GOODBYE, MY CAT."
BUB
BUB
BUB
"Goodbye, my cat."
"Thanks for everything you've done for me.
I'm heading out!"

"The spell ended and winter was brought to a close. Look, the castle ice is melting. I'll walk forward alongside the ice melt as it drains toward spring.

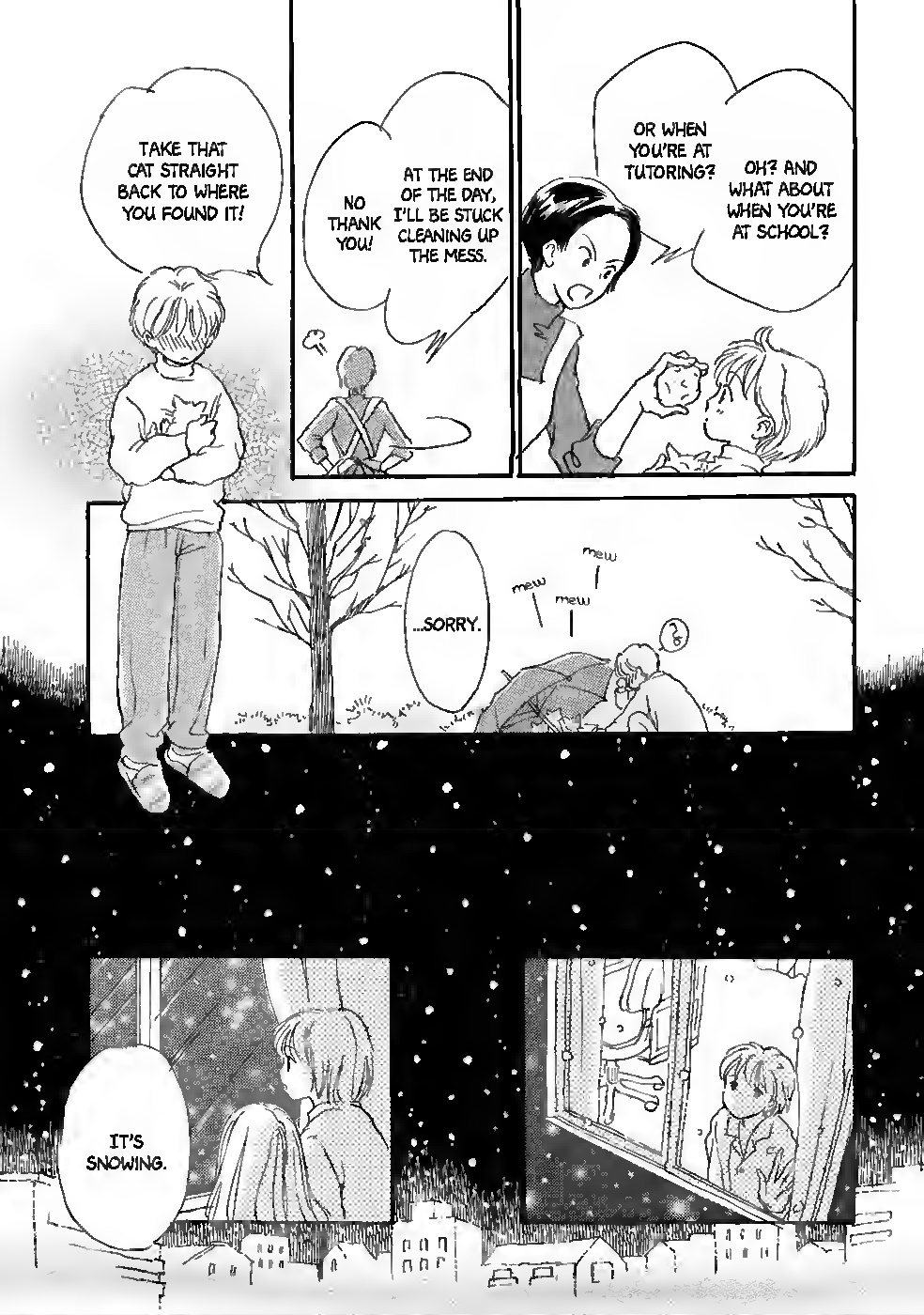
I'm sure this path will lead me across the rainbow."

END


mew
mew
OH MY GOSH, THEY'RE SO CUTE!
I WISH I COULD TAKE THEM HOME.
SAME WITH MINE. WHAT ABOUT YOU, NON-CHAN?
MY BUILDING DOESN'T ALLOW PETS, SO MY MOM SAYS WE CAN'T GET ONE.
SAME.
PART TWO
MILKY SNOW
It's because your moms have their hands full taking care of you guys~
My mom too!
AND MY MOM EVEN HAD A DOG WHEN SHE WAS LITTLE!
BUT IT'S ALWAYS "NO, NO, NO" FOR US. NO FAIR~
MAN...
WHY IS IT THAT ADULTS HATE DOGS AND CATS SO MUCH?

LOOKS LIKE IT'S GONNA RAIN
WHAT SHOULD WE DO? THEY'LL GET WET OUT HERE.
WE COULD PUT THEIR BOX UNDER A BENCH?
WE CAN'T DO THAT!
IF WE DID, EVEN IF SOMEONE CAME BY WHO COULD ADOPT THEM,
THEY'D PASS ON BY WITHOUT SEEING THEM.
OH, YEAH...
THE RED UMBRELLA WILL DRAW ATTENTION, TOO.
BUT WON'T YOUR PARENTS YELL AT YOU ABOUT THE UMBRELLA?
WAIT!
POP
I'LL TELL THEM I LOST IT.
stomp stomp stomp
Let's go, don't want to be late for tutoring

mew
MEW
No!
ABSO-LUTELY NOT!!
THAT CAT WILL SCRATCH THE WHOLE PLACE UP AND LEAVE HAIR EVERYWHERE!
I'D TRAIN IT MYSELF! AND TAKE CARE OF IT, TOO.
mew

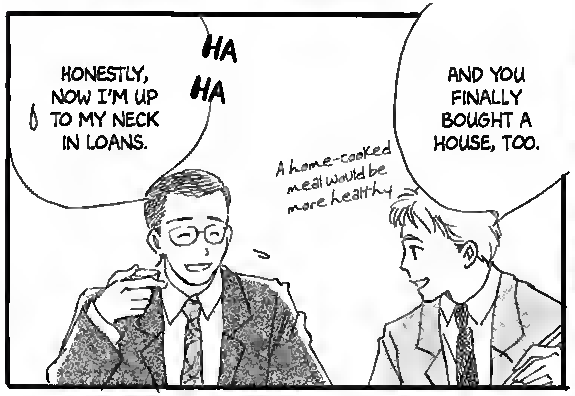

TAKE THAT CAT STRAIGHT BACK TO WHERE YOU FOUND IT!
NO THANK YOU!
AT THE END OF THE DAY, I'LL BE STUCK CLEANING UP THE MESS.
OR WHEN YOU'RE AT TUTORING?
OH? AND WHAT ABOUT WHEN YOU'RE AT SCHOOL?
...SORRY.
mew
mew
mew
IT'S SNOWING.

DO YOU THINK THEY'RE COLD?
MAYBE THEY'RE FREEZING?
I WONDER IF THOSE CATS ARE OK? MAYBE SOMEONE TOOK THEM.
EEE
EEE
EEE

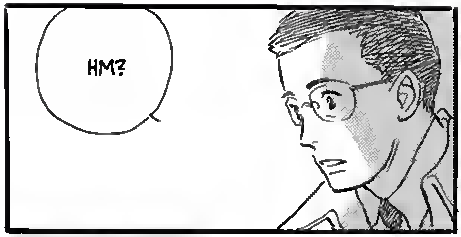
shake
shake
shake
shake
shake
Eee3
snuggle
shake
shake
END

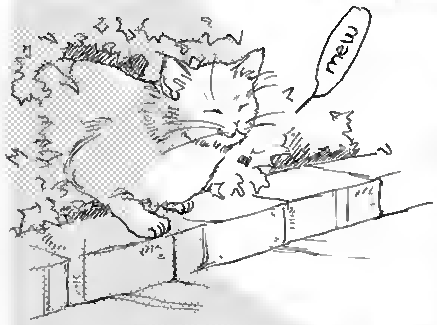
PART THREE EVENING FAIRY-TALES

I FEEL KINDA BAD FOR DRAGGING YOU OUT FOR DRINKS, TATSUKAWA.
HUH? DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
LAST NIGHT YOU HAD A BUSINESS DINNER, RIGHT?
AND BEFORE THAT, MEETINGS EVERY DAY...
WILL YOU GET TO EAT A SINGLE DINNER AT HOME THIS WEEK?
HMM, NOT SURE.



HARUKA?
IT TURNS OUT MY DAUGHTER'S A SPACE ALIEN.
THAT ARTIST WOULD BE CRYING.
YOU'VE GOT THAT BEAUTIFUL WIFE AND CUTE LITTLE GIRL. A PORTRAIT-WORTHY FAMILY.
AHAHAHA
HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS THESE DAYS ARE ALL THE SAME.
MAKES ME THINK SHE'S GOT SOME FOREIGNER IN HER.
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW SHE TALKS, AND HER HAIR'S RED NOW.
She was a normal Japanese girl until she hit middle school
Good work today
Night
You OK?
YOU'RE PRETTY WASTED.
NO, NO! THIS IS AN INVASION OF SPACE ALIENS WHO LOOK LIKE HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS!
Tatsukawa, you're sharp!


HM?


mew

RUSTLE

MM~ NICE AND WARM AND FLUFFY.
I think I'll walk home just like this

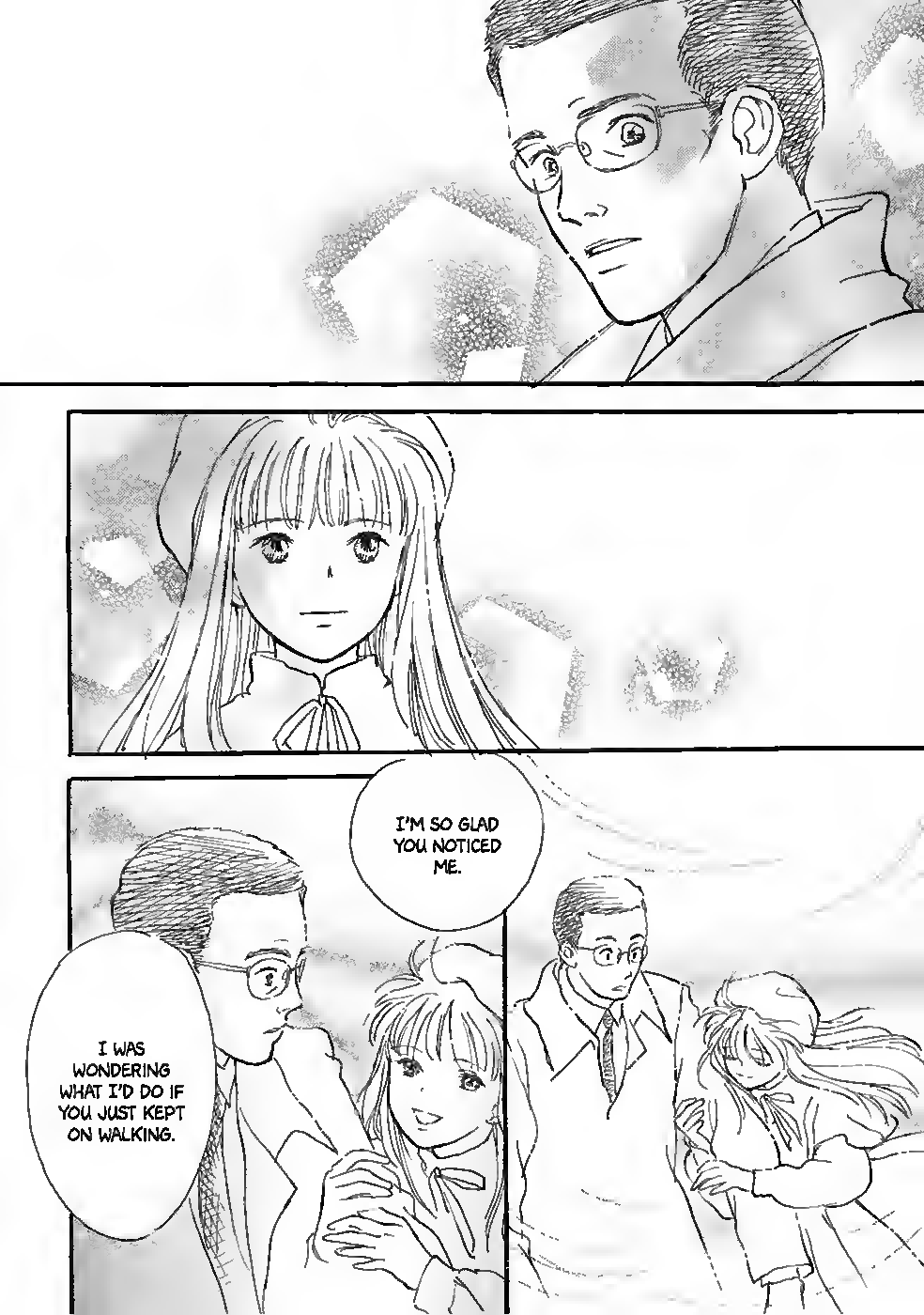
WHAT A FRIENDLY CAT.

WHY'RE YOU OUT HERE? YOU LOST, HM?
mew

EXCUSE ME!
IS THIS YOUR CAT?
nod
nod
haa
haa
...WHAT A RELIEF.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE SHE WENT OUT, SO I WAS GETTING WORRIED.
I JUST STARTED RUNNING AROUND LOOKING FOR HER.
IT LOOKS LIKE SHE LIKES YOU.
SEEMS SO.
No~
scrape

LET ME GIVE YOU SOMETHING AS THANKS FOR FINDING HER.
OH NO, I'M FINE. IT WAS NO BIG DEAL.
THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NOTHING THAT YOU WANT?
...That...
Is this like that golden axe and silver axe parable?
is a really dubious offer.
Maybe this is like a good deed for church? But he's pretty young..
I'll play it safe
WELL NOW.
HOW ABOUT FINDING ME MY CHILDHOOD CRUSH?
That's something I never got to experience.
YOUR CHILDHOOD CRUSH, HUH.

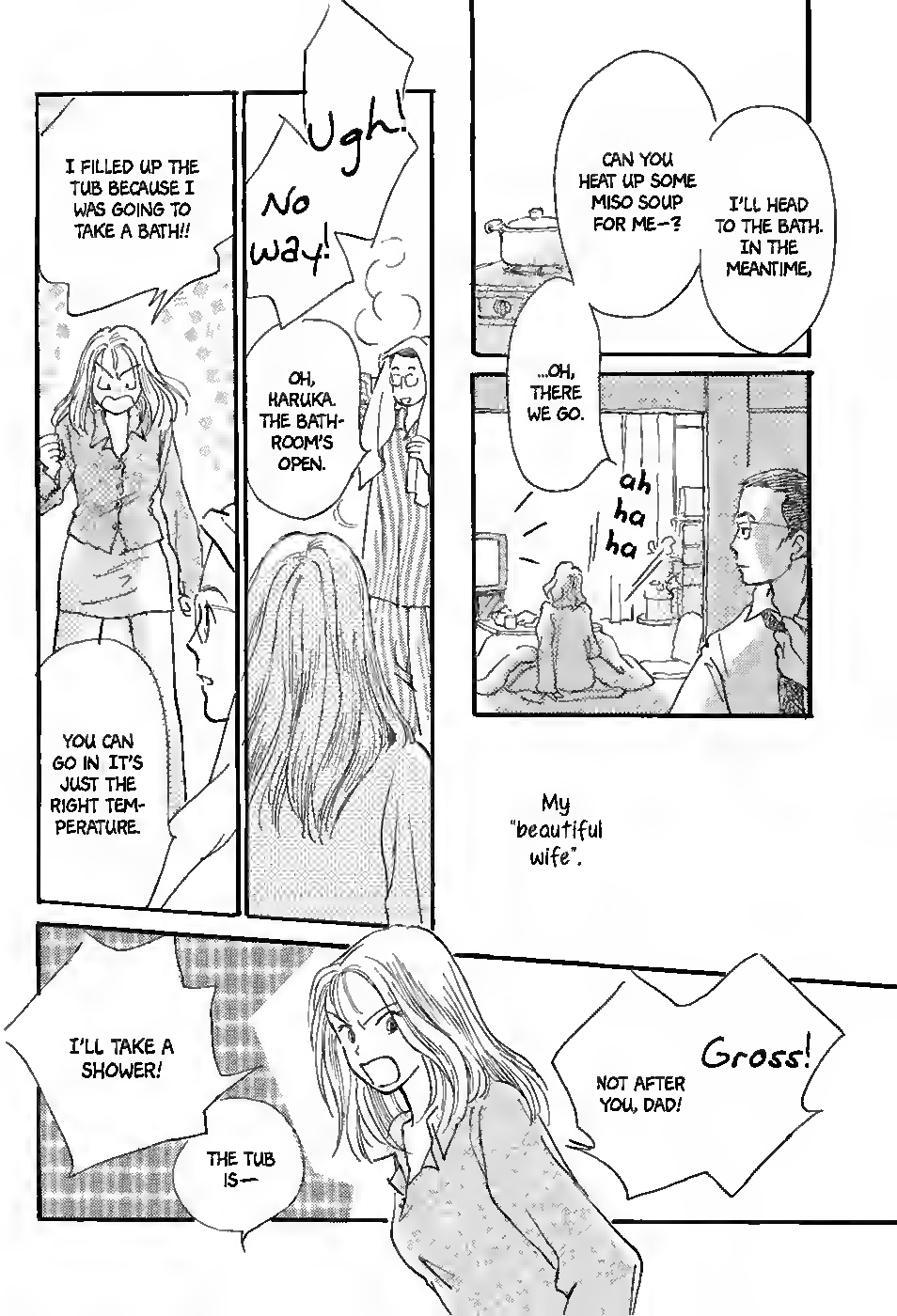
I don't get kids these days.
...BYE.
FARE-WELL.
GOT IT. I'LL DO MY BEST.


I'M SO GLAD YOU NOTICED ME.
I WAS WONDERING WHAT I'D DO IF YOU JUST KEPT ON WALKING.

SHE'S TOO YOUNG TO BE HARUKA'S FRIEND.
EVEN IF SHE SAYS THAT...
SMILE SMILE
AND WHO ARE YOU?
IT'S ME!
something about her
feels familiar
But this girl...
WHAT ABOUT YOU? AREN'T YOU A CHILD?
I'M 42.
CHILDREN SHOULDN'T BE OUT AT THIS HOUR WALKING ALONE.
and makes my heart flutter.
OH GOD, AM I A PERVERT?
OH!
THEN I'M THE SAME.

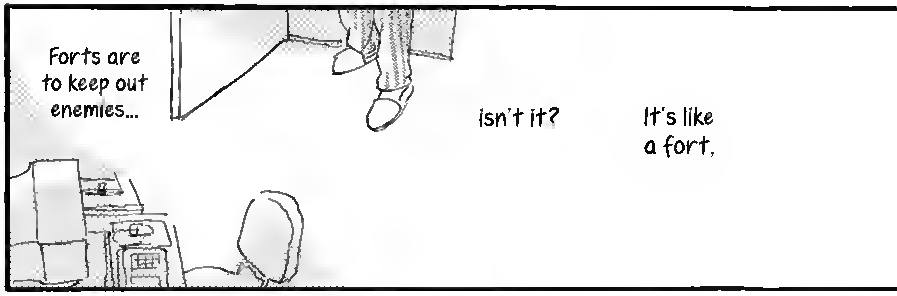
ANYWAY,
IT'S GETTING LATE. HURRY ON HOME.
...
YOU'RE WHAT, 12 OR 13 AT THE MOST?
THEN YOU'RE THE SAME.
Weird things seem to happen all the time at the end of the year.
YES.
I AM GOING HOME.
OH, REALLY?
So it's in the same direction.
Maybe she lives in the neighborhood
.....
HEY..
DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO GO HOME?

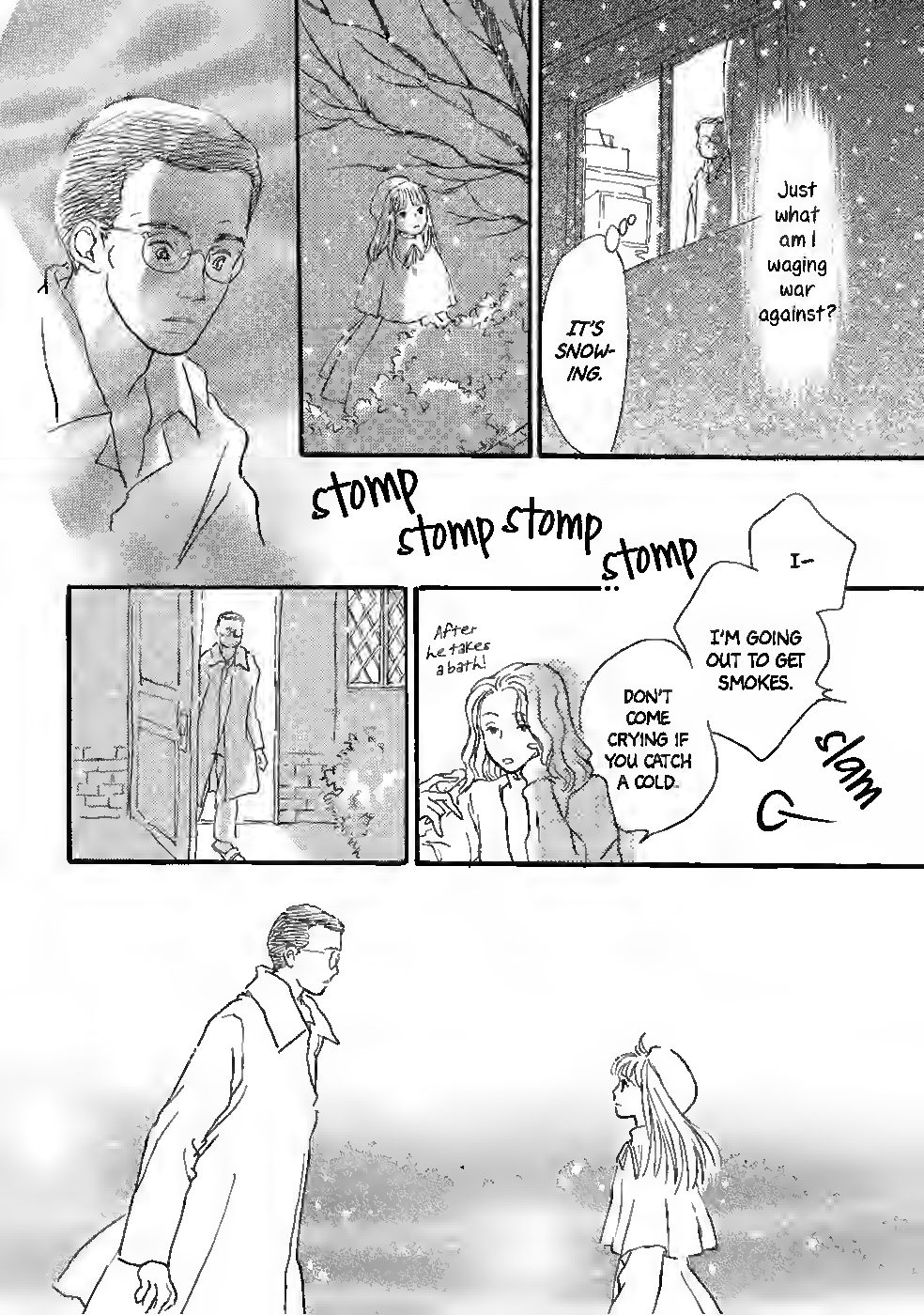
.....
stop
GOOD-NIGHT!
YOU'RE LATE.
WE ALREADY ATE.
YEAH.
Just what's going on tonight?
I'M BACK.

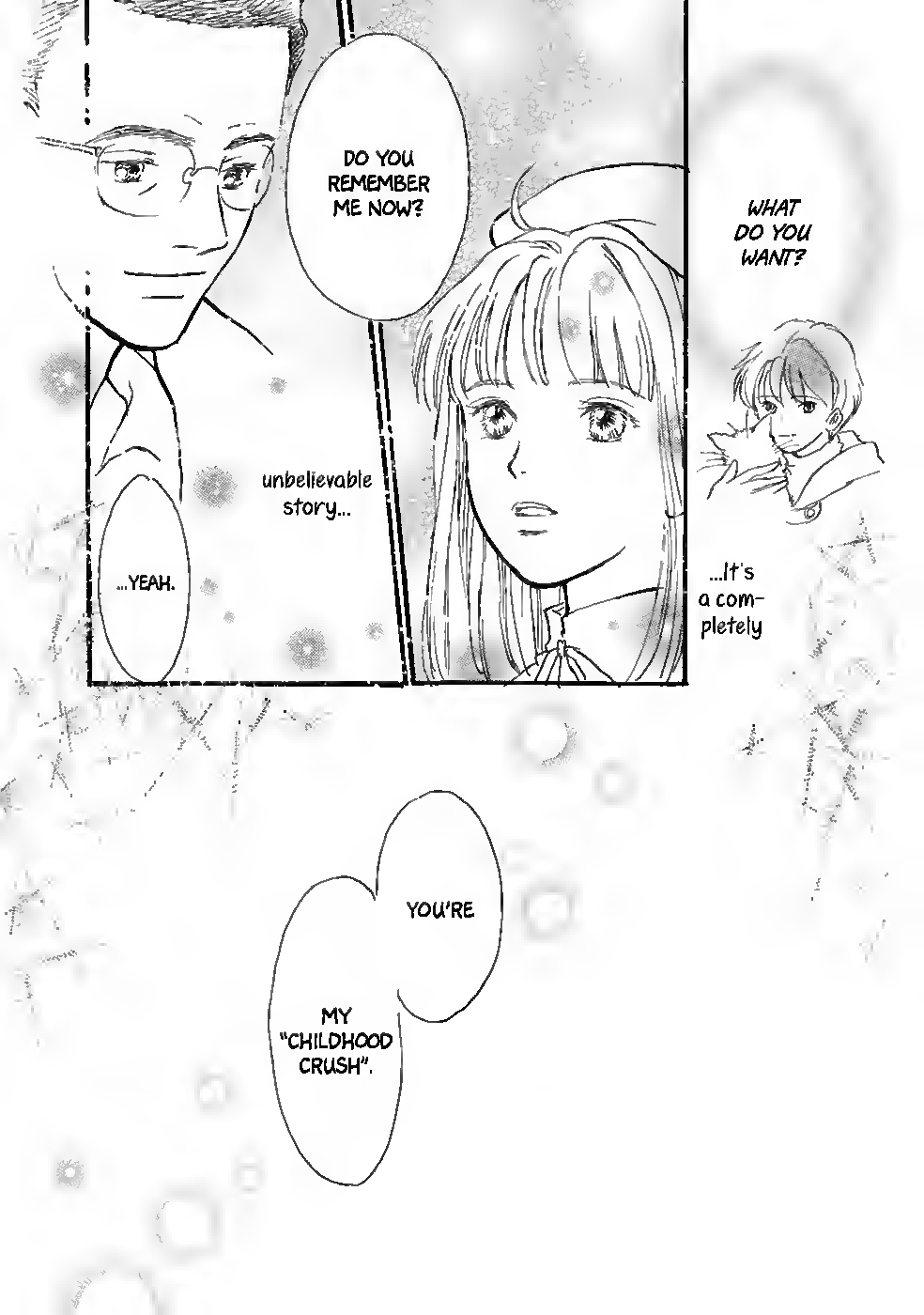

I'LL HEAD TO THE BATH. IN THE MEANTIME,
CAN YOU HEAT UP SOME MISO SOUP FOR ME—?
...OH, THERE WE GO.
ah ha ha
My "beautiful wife".
I FILLED UP THE TUB BECAUSE I WAS GOING TO TAKE A BATH!!
Ugh! No way!
OH, HARUKA. THE BATHROOM'S OPEN.
YOU CAN GO IN IT'S JUST THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE.
I'LL TAKE A SHOWER!
THE TUB IS—
NOT AFTER YOU, DAD!
Gross!

My "cute daughter".

My "home".

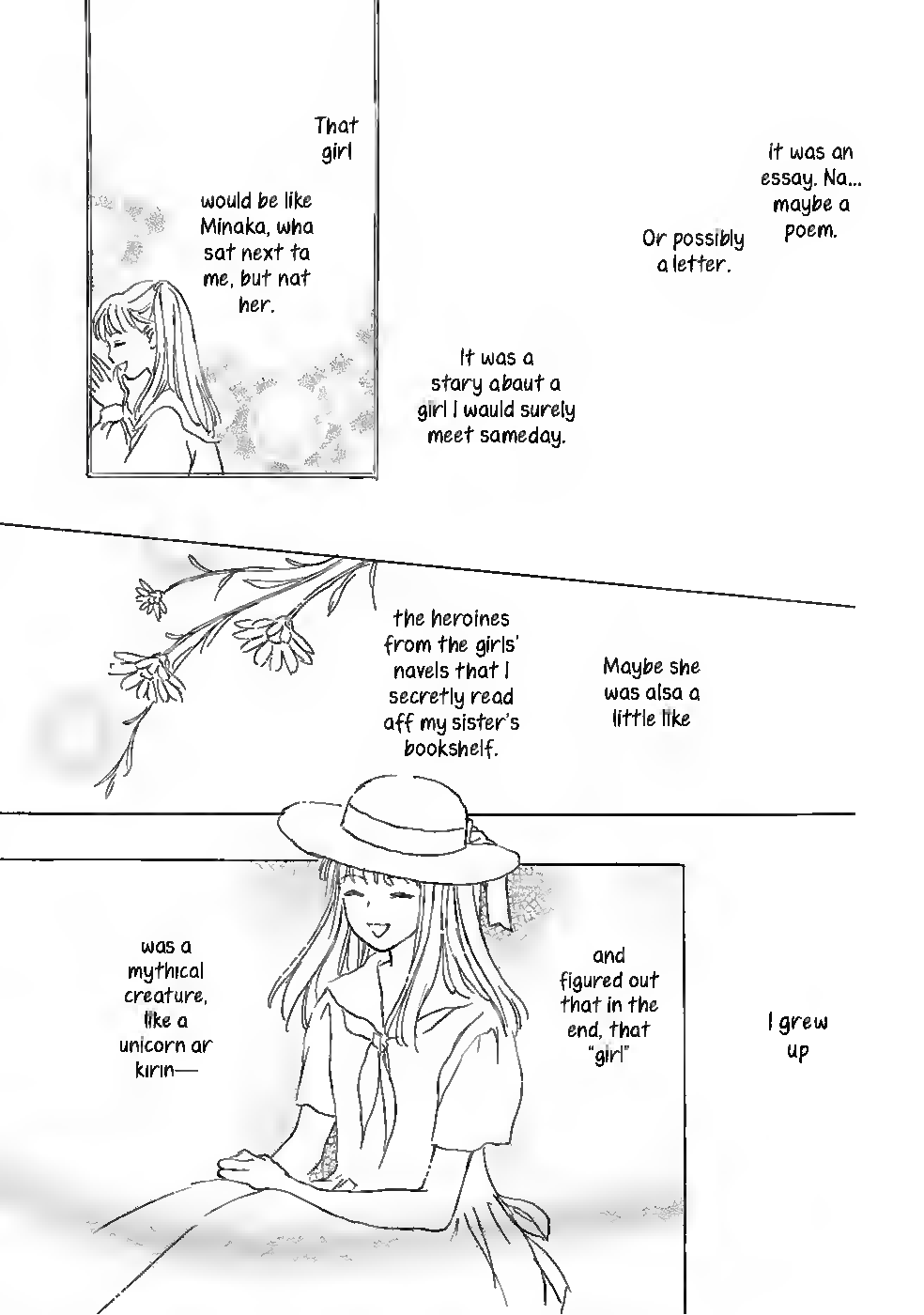



Just what am I waging war against?
IT'S SNOW-ING.
stomp stomp stomp stomp..
I-
I'M GOING OUT TO GET SMOKES.
DON'T COME CRYING IF YOU CATCH A COLD.
After he takes a bath!
slam

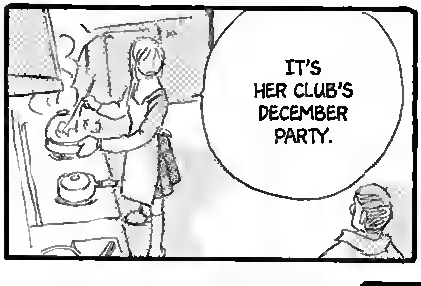

DO YOU REMEMBER ME NOW?
...YEAH.
unbelievable story...
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
...It's a completely
YOU'RE
MY "CHILDHOOD CRUSH".

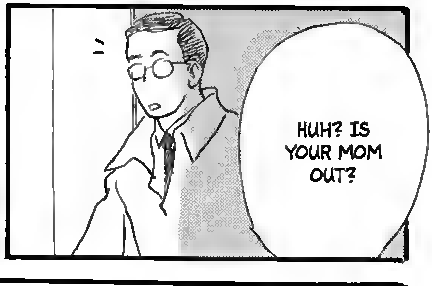
How old was I then?

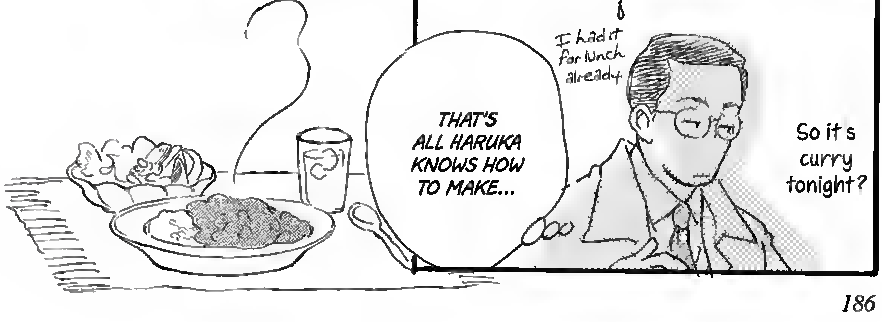
I think

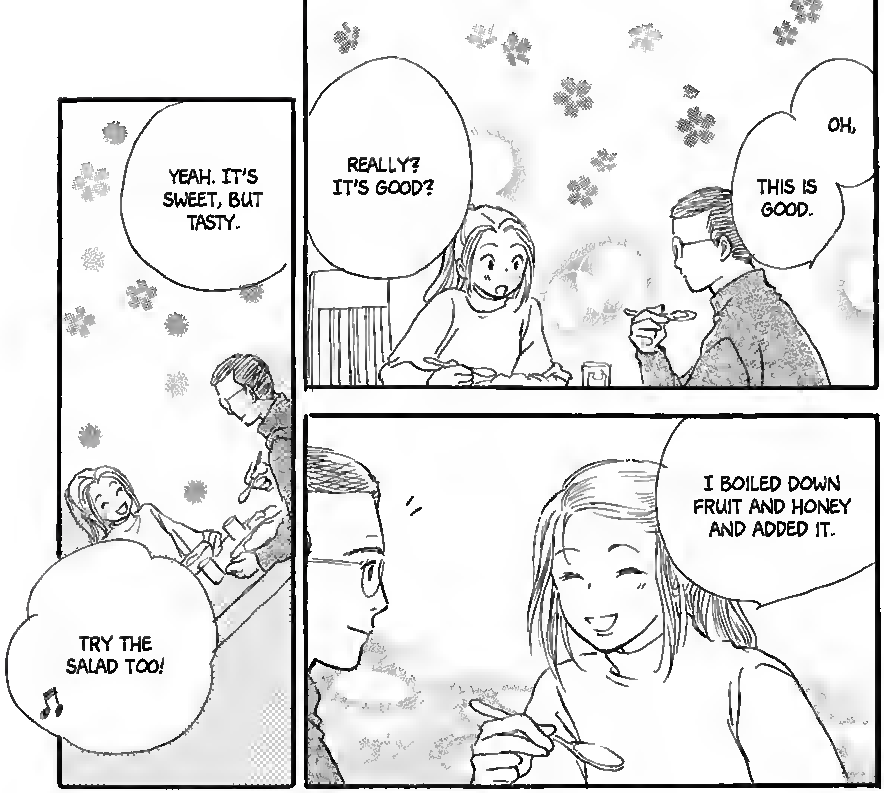

That girl would be like Minaka, wha sat next ta me, but nat her.
Or possibly a letter.
it was an essay. Na... maybe a poem.
It was a stary abaut a girl I wauld surely meet sameday.
the heroines from the girls' navels that I secretly read aff my sister's bookshelf.
Maybe she was alsa a little like
was a mythical creature, like a unicorn ar kirin—
and figured out that in the end, that "girl"
I grew up

I'M BACK.
DID SOMETHING GOOD HAPPEN?
IT'S A SECRET.
Can't tell you, it's too good
CHEAP-SKATE~
YOU'VE BEEN IN HIGH FORM RECENTLY, TATSUKAWA. YOU'RE THE TOP PERFORMER RIGHT NOW.
At this rate, you might get the Hawaii trip

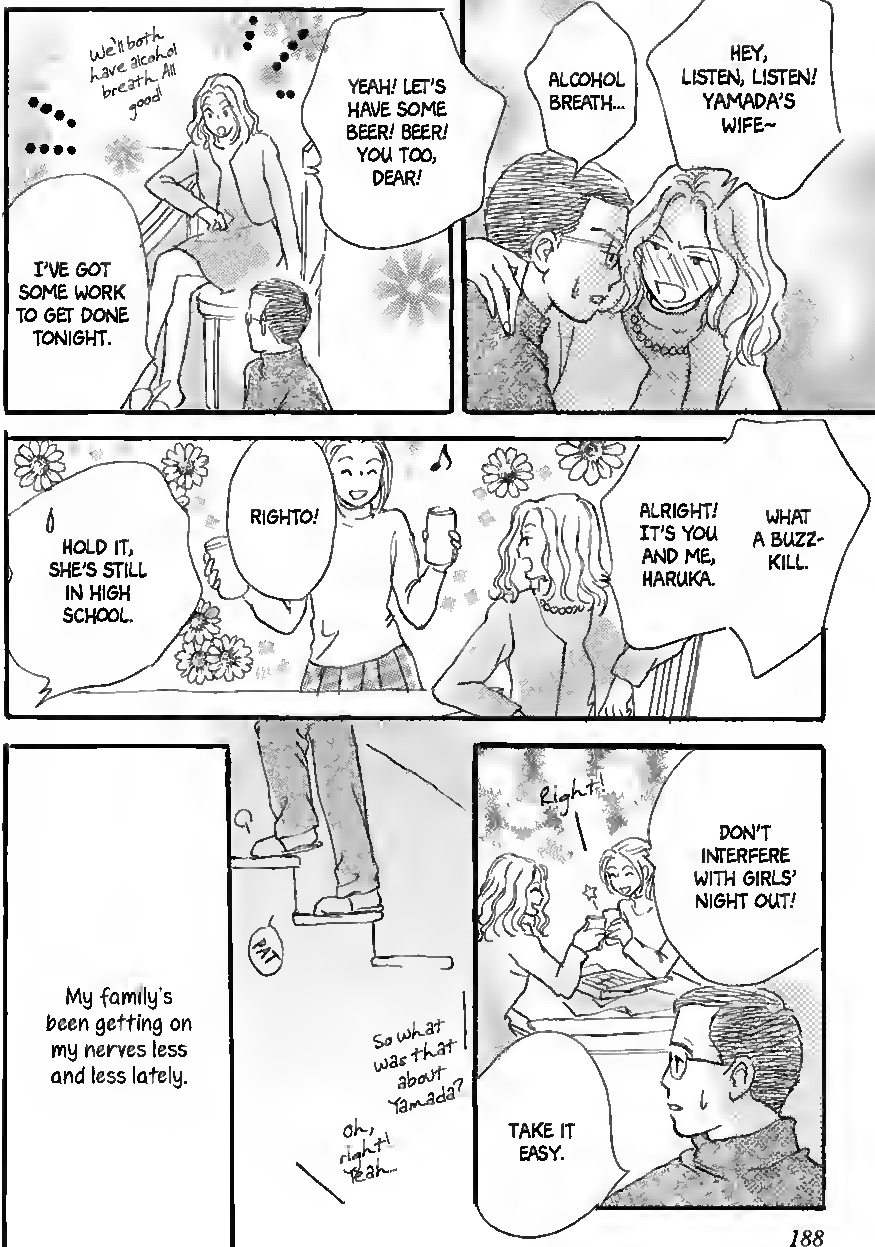

IT'S HER CLUB'S DECEMBER PARTY.


HUH? IS YOUR MOM OUT?

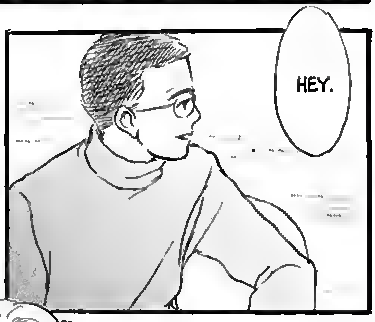

THAT'S ALL HARUKA KNOWS HOW TO MAKE...
I had it for lunch already
So it's curry tonight?


OH, THIS IS GOOD.
REALLY? IT'S GOOD?
YEAH. IT'S SWEET, BUT TASTY.
I BOILED DOWN FRUIT AND HONEY AND ADDED IT.
TRY THE SALAD TOO!

I'm back~
BACK
WE JUST FINISHED CURRY.
LOOK HERE.
LET'S ALL ENJOY~
HEY, I BROUGHT SUSHI~


We'll both have alcohol breath. All good!
YEAH! LET'S HAVE SOME BEER! BEER! YOU TOO, DEAR!
I'VE GOT SOME WORK TO GET DONE TONIGHT.
ALCOHOL BREATH...
HEY, LISTEN, LISTEN! YAMADA'S WIFE~
HOLD IT, SHE'S STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL.
RIGHTO!
ALRIGHT! IT'S YOU AND ME, HARUKA.
WHAT A BUZZ-KILL.
My family's been getting on my nerves less and less lately.
PAT
So what was that about Yamada?
Oh, right! Yeah
Right!
DON'T INTERFERE WITH GIRLS' NIGHT OUT!
TAKE IT EASY.

Like a cat,



the girl just pops up sometimes

and stays at my side.

She just stays at my side

and smiles.

Yeah,

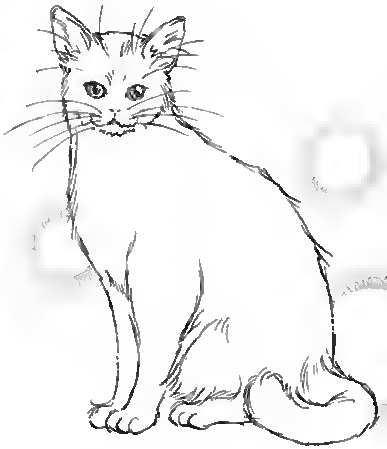
it's nice to have this strange thing in my life.

You

are a
paem, a
stary.

An evening
fairy-tale

written
just far me.



END

This is a reprint of the comic published in 2001 by Poplar Sha. The stories are doujinshi I drew between '95 and '98.

Unlike paid jobs, with doujinshi you can just rush through with poor storyboards and finish quickly in a marathon setting.

Back when I didn't have many drawing jobs (not that I have many now), I did these doujinshi as practice. But since I avoided doing the critical storyboard work, my work gained neither polish nor sophistication. I guess it gained spontaneity...? But I simply enjoy drawing manga, so it was only natural to do doujinshi.

While this volume contains only stories I drew as a hobby, I hope that those who read it can feel an inkling of the excitement I felt when I drew them.

Thank you for reading. And for giving new readers the chance to pick up this reprint, I also have to give my gratitude to Gentosha.

2002 Konno Kita